AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details with number of employees of ITDC hotels in New Delhi and Calcutta who have been sent out during the last one year under ITDCs Voluntary Retirement Scheme along with total amount of expenditure incurred by each of the hotels in the above two cities;

(b) whether it is a fact that services and operational structures in these hotels have been adversely affected during this period due to the absence of this staff;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some of the staff who opted for the VRS and were released about eighth months ago have not so far been given their final payments;

(d) whether any investigations have been ordered in this regard;

(e) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(f) what further action Government propose to take to ensure final payment to the concerned employees without any further delay?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) 578 employees of various hotels in Delhi and 4 employees of Hotel Airport Ashok Calcutta have sought retirement under the 'Voluntary Retirement Scheme of ITDC' introduced during the year 1992. The total amount payable to these employees on account of compensation, leave encashment, notice pay etc. is worked out at Rs. 485.68 lakhs.

(b) ITDC Management has taken appropriate steps to make internal adjustments and redeployment of the staff.

(c) The required payment could not be made by ITDC to some employees for non-submission of 'No Demand Certificate' and non-completion of other formalities.

(d) to (f) ITDC Management has again issued instructions to its units to take urgent steps to expedite the settlement of claims of the employees who have sought Voluntary Retirement.

Losses due to operation of Air taxies

4. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines is facing stiff competition from Air Taxi operators;

(b) if so, whether Indian Airlines have suffered losses or profits on routes where air taxies are operating; and

(c) what are the details of routes where Government have permitted private operators to operate?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Indian Airlines has suffered marginal loss due to operation of Air taxi service

(c) Air Taxi operators' permit holders are free to operate to any station in the country open for scheduled operations with the approval of Airport Authorities.

Visit of foreign tourists to India

5. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of foreign tourists who have arrived in the country, so far, during the current year;

(b) the amount of foreign exchange earned from the tourists arrival during the said period; and

(c) the amount of foreign exchange spent on tourism publicity during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) The number of foreign tourists who visited